

# CHECKLIST FOR MOCK INTERVIEWS

## Before the Interview

- ❑ Create a resume and write a cover letter targeted for the specific job you are applying for. Then schedule a resume and cover letter review at the Career Center. To schedule an appointment, stop by or call 342.1183.
- ❑ Schedule a mock interview at least one week in advance of your scheduled employment interview. Mock interviews are scheduled with Sharon Becker or Diana Trendt. Schedule a one-hour appointment, stop by or call 342.1183.
- ❑ Two days before your scheduled mock interview, drop your resume, cover letter, and position description of the job you are applying at the front reception desk of the Career Center. Ask the receptionist to forward the information to the appropriate Career Consultant.
- ❑ Review the handouts in this packet: Interviewing, Interview Questions, Behavioral Interviews, and Illegal Interview Questions.
- ❑ Practice answering various interview questions from the handouts.
- ❑ Read the handout titled, “Your Professional Image,” which is also included in this packet.
- ❑ Be prepared to ask the interviewer or career consultant questions about the company and job/internship you are applying for at the end of your mock interview session.

## Taped or Non-taped Mock Interview Session

Before scheduling your appointment with a Career Consultant, determine if your mock interview will be taped. In order to be taped, special arrangements will need to be made for video equipment. Please bring your own tape to the session. You will have the option to review the tape with a Career Consultant directly following your interview session. Another option would be to review the tape on your own and then schedule another appointment to review it with a Career Consultant. If you choose to tape your mock interview, please inform the receptionist when scheduling your appointment.

## Special Advantages of a Taped Interview Session

- ❑ View your posture, mannerisms, facial expressions, and tone of voice.
- ❑ Opportunity to critique your responses.
- ❑ Listen to the content of the message. It gives you the opportunity to evaluate how and what you said. As you listen to your responses, you may find yourself saying – *I could have included \_\_\_\_\_ in my response.*

## The Day of the Interview

- ❑ Arrive 10-15 minutes before the scheduled interview. Please be dressed in interview attire.
- ❑ Check in at the reception desk.

- ❑ Find a seat in the Resource Center. The mock interview will most likely take place in an interview room. However, there might be an exception and the interview may be held in a Career Consultants' office. The mock interview will begin to take place when the Career Consultant calls your name, your eyes meet, and your hand is extended.
- ❑ Plan on 20 -30 minutes for the interview.
- ❑ Directly following the interview, the Career Consultant and student will critique the taped mock interview session.

### After the Interview

- ❑ Read the handout on, "Thank You Letter." Send the Interviewer/Career Consultant a thank you letter.

*The Key to a Successful Interview?*  
→ *Be Prepared!*

## **ANALYZING YOUR POTENTIAL EMPLOYER**

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There are many important areas of preparation to deal with prior to the interview. By thoroughly preparing, you increase your chances of making a positive first impression. One of the most important steps involves researching the company.

It is annoying for a recruiter to talk with a candidate who doesn't have any knowledge about the company. A favorite question asked is, "Why are you interested in our organization?" If you don't know anything about the employer, you won't be able to answer the question intelligently.

Researching the organization also helps determine whether your goals will fit the promotional structures defined by that employer. For example, there are some employers who have a reputation for being conservative and if you cannot fit in with this type of work environment, you know that talking to the recruiter would be a waste of time.

### **ORGANIZATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS**

It's wise to begin researching weeks before your interview. You may find reams of information and you must be able to sort out the pertinent information and retain the key facts. Additionally, it may be difficult to find some information and some digging will be required.

If you are interviewing with a number of different employers, it's smart to keep a file on each one. As you do more research, the file will help you keep facts organized making the preparation easier.

The information in each file should include articles from periodicals or newspapers, tips and comments from others and annual reports. When it is time to prepare for the interview, you can organize the information in a way that will impress the recruiter during the interview.

### **WHAT INFORMATION TO LOOK FOR**

Before hunting for background information about a potential employer, first ascertain what kind of information you're looking for. Then determine where to find that information. Take this research project one step at a time and allow yourself enough time.

It's a mistake to assume you know enough about the organization without doing any research. For example, you may know that Ralston Purina makes pet food, but are you aware the company also makes cereal for humans, owns a major tuna fish company, and owns and operates resorts and restaurants? You may be taking with a subsidiary of a much larger company and not realize it if you don't do your research.

### **Facts to Know About the Organization**

- Size of organization in industry
- Annual sales growth for past five years
- Complete product line or services
- Potential new products or services
- Age of top management and their backgrounds
- Location of corporate headquarters
- Number of plants, stores, and outlets
- Recent developments via news stories
- Name and correct spelling of recruiter
- Potential growth
- Competition
- Geographical locations
- Organizational structure
- Type of training program
- Promotional path
- Relocation policies
- History of organization
- Typical career path in your field

Some information will not be available and you should ask the recruiter for clarification during the interview. Tell the interviewer you are aware of certain policies within the organization (thus proving you have some knowledge of the company), but you would like to discuss certain management policies in more detail.

Never leave the interview without knowing the recruiter's name (including correct spelling), title, and address. This information will be invaluable when you begin your correspondence with the organization. If you are not comfortable asking the recruiter, consult the placement office for this information, or contact the company. Don't rely on information from someone who interviewed with the same recruiter because it may be erroneous.

### **INFORMATION SOURCES AVAILABLE**

Researching an organization can be done through a variety of sources. The primary source should be annual reports and employment brochures. While this information is prepared by the organization and includes predominantly positive information, it is a good starting place. All publicly held companies are required to report to their stockholders via annual reports. If the library does not have the necessary information, you can contact the organization directly.

The library should also have different business periodicals and newspapers. Robert Q. Traxel, author of *Manager's Guide to Successful Job Hunting*, suggests using the following publications. These are listed below and should be perused for articles, both about the company in question and also its competition.

1. The Wall Street Journal
2. Barron's
3. Dun's Review
4. Business Week
5. Forbes
6. Fortune
7. Trade Publications
8. Finance and business section of local newspaper

There are also directories available which can be useful sources. If these directories are not available at the library, check with local stockbrokerage firms. The important thing is not to give up if you can't find the information at the library. Check with the reference department and ask for advice. If the library doesn't have the information you need, they can often refer you to an alternative source.

### **Useful directories include:**

1. Standard and Poor's corporation records

2. Dun and Bradstreet reference library
3. Moody's manuals
4. Thomas' Register of American Manufacturers

### **IS IT REALLY NECESSARY?**

This may seem like a lot of trouble to go through just to be prepared for the interview. Finding the right job is hard work and should be approached in such a manner as to stack the odds in your favor.

There is keen competition and you're trying to market a product -yourself- successfully! There is rarely a professional position open that does not draw at least five qualified applicants.

Remember, you are trying to create a positive impression by appearing informed and goal-directed. One way to demonstrate your goals is to indicate during the interview what interested you in that specific organization and how your goals, qualifications, and personality fit that employer's opportunities.

You only get one chance to leave the right impression; so take the time to do your homework and research the organization, and you will increase your chances of leaving a positive impression.

## **WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE INTERVIEW?**

The interviewing process can be scary if you don't know what to expect. Most interviews tend to fit a general pattern and share 3 common characteristics: the beginning, middle and conclusion.

The typical interview for an entry-level position will last 30 minutes, although some may be longer. A typical structure is as follows:

- Five minutes--small talk
- Fifteen minutes--discussion of your background and credentials as they relate to the needs of the employer
- Five minutes--asks you for questions
- Five minutes--conclusion

As you can see, there is not much time to state your case. The employer may try to do most of the talking. When you do respond to questions or ask your own, your statements should be concise and organized without being too brief.

### **It Starts Before You Even Say Hello**

The typical interview starts before you even get into inner sanctum. The recruiter begins to evaluate you the minute you are identified. You are expected to shake the recruiter's hand upon being introduced. Don't be afraid to extend your hand first. This shows assertiveness.

It is a good idea to arrive at least 15 minutes early. You can use the time to relax and look over notes you've prepared.

### **How's Your Small Talk Vocabulary?**

Many recruiters will begin the interview with some small talk. Topics may range from the weather to sports and will rarely focus on anything that brings out your skills. Nonetheless, you are still being evaluated.

Recruiters are trained to evaluate candidates on many different points. They may be judging how well you communicate on an informal basis. You must do more than just smile and nod.

## **The Recruiter Has the Floor**

The main part of the interview starts when the recruiter begins discussing the organization. If the recruiter is vague about the position and you want more specific information ask questions. Be sure you have a clear understanding of the job and the company. With on-campus interviewing, employers may schedule an Employer Informational Session expecting all candidates interviewing to attend. At that session, the employer will share company information so your scheduled interview may be dedicated to you.

As the discussion turns to your qualifications, be prepared to deal with aspects of your background that could be construed as negative, e.g., low grade point average, no participation in outside activities, no related work experience. It is up to you to convince the recruiter that although these points appear negative, positive attributes can be found in them. A low GPA could stem from having to fully support yourself through college; you might have no related work experience, but plenty of experience that shows you to be a loyal and valued employee.

Many times recruiters will ask why you chose the major you did or what your career goals are. These questions are designed to determine your goal direction. Employers seek people who have direction and motivation, which can be demonstrated by your answers to these innocent-sounding questions.

## **It's Your Turn to Ask Questions**

When the recruiter asks, "Now do you have any questions?" it's important to have a few ready. Dr. C. Randall Powell, author of *Career Planning Today*, believes that questions should elicit positive responses from the employer. Also, the questions should bring out your interest in and knowledge of the organization.

By asking intelligent, well-thought-out questions, you show the employer you are serious about the organization and need more information. It indicates that you have done your homework.

## **Expect the Unexpected**

During the interview, you may be asked some unusual questions. Don't be too surprised. Many times questions are asked simply to see how you react.

For example, surprise questions could range from, "Tell me a joke" to "What time period would you like to have lived in?" These are not the kind of questions for which you can prepare in advance. The employer will evaluate your reaction time and the response you give, but there's no way to anticipate questions like these. While these questions are not always used, they are intended to force you to react under some stress and pressure. The best advice is to think and give a natural response.

## **The Close Counts, Too**

The interview is not over until you walk out the door. The conclusion usually lasts 5 minutes and is very important. During this time the recruiter is assessing your overall performance.

It is important to remain enthusiastic and courteous. Often the conclusion of the interview is indicated when the recruiter stands up. However, if you feel the interview has reached its conclusion, feel free to stand up first.

Shake the recruiter's hand and thank him or her for considering you. Being forthright is a quality that most employers will respect, indicating that you feel you have presented your case and the decision is now up to the employer.

## Evaluations Made by Recruiters

Remember that the employer will be observing and evaluating you throughout the interview. Erwin S. Stanton, author of *Successful Personnel Recruiting and Selection*, indicated some evaluations made by the employer during the interview include:

1. How mentally alert and responsive is the job candidate?
2. Is the applicant able to draw proper inferences and conclusions during the interview?
3. Does the applicant demonstrate a degree of intellectual depth when communicating, or is his/her thinking shallow and lacking depth?
4. Has the candidate used good judgment and common sense regarding life planning?
5. What is the applicant's capacity for problem-solving activities?
6. How well does the candidate respond to stress and pressure?

► For more information, visit: <http://fastweb.monster.com>

# TEN RULES OF INTERVIEWING

Before stepping into an interview, be sure to practice, practice, practice! A job-seeker going to an interview without preparing is like an actor performing on opening night without rehearsing.

To help you with the interview process, keep the following ten rules in mind:

1. Keep your answers brief and concise. Unless asked to give more detail, limit your answers to two to three minutes per question. Tape yourself and see how long it takes you to fully answer a question.
2. Include concrete, quantifiable data. Interviewees tend to talk in generalities. Unfortunately, generalities often fail to convince interviewers that the applicant is skilled. Include measurable information and provide details about specific accomplishments when discussing your strengths.
3. Repeat your key strengths several times. It's essential that you comfortably and confidently articulate your strengths. Explain how the strengths relate to the company or department goals and how they might benefit the potential employer. If you repeat your strengths they will be remembered and --if supported with quantifiable accomplishments-- they will more likely be believed.
4. Prepare five or more success stories. In preparing for interviews, make a list of your skills and key assets. Then reflect on past jobs and pick out one or two instances when you used those skills successfully.
5. Put yourself on their team. Ally yourself with the prospective employer by using the employer's name and products or services. For example, "As a member of \_\_\_\_\_, I would carefully analyze the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_." Show that you are thinking like a member of the team and will fit in with the existing environment. Be careful, though, not to say anything that would offend or be taken negatively. Your research will help you in this area.
6. Image is often as important as content. What you look like and how you say something are just as important as what you say. Studies have shown that 65% of the conveyed message is nonverbal; gestures, physical appearance and attire are highly influential during job interviews.
7. Ask Questions. The types of questions you ask and the way you ask them can make a tremendous impression on the interviewer. Good questions require advance preparation. Just as you plan how you would answer an interviewer's questions, write out specific questions you want to ask. Then look for opportunities to ask them during the interview. (Don't ask about benefits or salary.) The interview

process is a two-way street whereby you and the interviewer assess each other to determine if there is an appropriate match.

8. Maintain a conversational flow. By consciously maintaining a conversational flow-- a dialogue instead of monologue-- you will be perceived more positively. Use feedback questions at the end of your answers and use body language and voice intonation to create a conversational interchange between you and the interviewer.
  9. Research the company, product lines, and competitors. Research will provide important information to refer to during an interview and help you decide whether you're interested in the company.
  10. Keep an interview journal. As soon as possible, write a brief summary of what happened. Note any follow-up action you should take and put in your calendar. Review your presentation. Keep a journal of your attitude and the way you answered the questions. Did you ask questions to get the information you needed? What might you do differently next time? Prepare and send a brief, concise thank-you letter. Restate your skills and stress what you can do for the company.
- For more information, visit: <http://fastweb.monster.com>

# QUESTIONS ABOUT BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWS

## What is a Behavior Based Interview?

**Behavioral Based Interviewing** focuses on experiences, behaviors, knowledge, skills and abilities that are job related. It is based on the belief that past behavior and performance predicts future behavior and performance. You may use work, school projects and family life as examples of your past behavior. Current employment literature indicates that the majority of employers use this type of interviewing style.

## What do Employers Evaluate in a Behavioral Interview?

Employers are looking for 3 - types of skills:

- Content Skills.
- Functional also known as Transferable Skills.
- Adaptive also known as Self-Management Skills.

**Content Skills** – Knowledge that is work specific such as computer programming, accounting, welding and expressed as nouns.

**Functional or Transferable Skills** – Used with people, information or things such as organizing, managing, developing, communicating and expressed as verbs.

**Adaptive or Self-Management Skills** – Personal characteristics such as dependable, team player, self directed, punctual and expressed as adjectives.

## How are Behavioral Questions Different From Other Types of Interviewing Questions?

There are 3 - types of questions typically found in interviews:

**1. Theoretical Questions** – Questions that place you in a hypothetical situation. These questions are more likely to test your skill at answering questions rather than in doing a good job.

**Example:** How would you organize your friends to help you move into a new apartment?

**2. Leading Questions** – Questions that hint at the answer the interviewer is seeking by the way they are phrased.

**Examples:** Working on your own doesn't bother you does it?

**3. Behavioral Questions** – Questions that seek demonstrated examples of behavior from your past experiences and concentrate on job related functions. They may include:

- **Open-end questions** – These require more than a yes or no response. They often begin with “Tell me...” “When...”

**Example:** Describe a time you had to be flexible in planning a workload.

- **Close-end questions** - Used mostly to verify or confirm information.

**Example:** You have a degree in psychology, is that correct?

- **Why questions** – Used to reveal rationale for decisions you have made or to determine your level of motivation.

**Example:** Why did you decide to major in this program at UWP rather than at a private college or larger university?

## A Quiz on Behavioral, Theoretical and Leading Questions

- A. How would you resolve a customer service problem where the customer demanded an immediate refund?
- B. Tell me about a time when you had to juggle a number of work priorities. What did you do?
- C. You can work weekends occasionally can't you?

Answers: A. Theoretical; B. Behavioral; C. Leading

## How Can I Best Answer Behavior-Based Questions?

Think of “PAR for the Course.” A complete answer to a behavior-based question must:

- Explain the task or problem for which you were responsible.
- Discuss the specific action you took.
- Explain the results of your actions.

Your answer must contain *all of these components to be a PAR answer. Tell the interviewer a “story” (with a beginning, a middle, and an end) about how you used a practical skill.*

**Problem (P)** – Advertising revenue was falling off for the Daily News and large numbers of long-term advertisers were not renewing contracts.

**Action (A)** – We designed a new promotional package to go with the rate sheet and compared the benefits of DN circulation with other ad media in the area. I also set-up a special training session for the account executives with a College of Business professor who discussed competitive selling strategies.

**Result (R)** – We designed contracts with fifteen former advertisers for daily ads and five for special supplements. We increased our new advertisers by twenty percent (quantities are always good) over the same period last year.

## Can You Give Me an Example of a Complete PAR Story?

Right before Thanksgiving break; most of the guys had gone home for the weekend break. Our fraternity president and vice president had already left for home when we received a call that one of our brothers had been involved in a car accident. I volunteered to go to the hospital to be with him and then called his parents. I also made arrangements for them to stay at the Hospital Hospitality House when they arrived. They were pleased I had taken time from my own weekend to help them. Our chapter advisor congratulated me for keeping a cool head handling the situation. I've since decided to run for chapter office.

## How Can I Prepare for a Behavioral Interview?

- Analyze the type of positions for which you're applying. Try to get an actual job description. What skills do employers require?
- Analyze your own background. What skills do you have (content, functional, and adaptive) that relate to your job objective?
- Identify examples from your past experience where you demonstrate those skills. How can you "tell a story" about your use of particular skills or knowledge? Concentrate on developing complete PAR answers [and remember that a good story has a beginning, middle and end.]
- Whenever possible, quantify your results. Numbers illustrate your level of authority and responsibility.
- Be prepared to provide examples of when results didn't turn out as you planned. What did you do then?
- Before starting the interview process, identify 2 to 3 of your top selling points and determine how you will convey these points (with demonstrated PAR stories) during the interview.
- Once employed, keep a personal achievement diary to help document demonstrated performance (PAR stories).

Materials adapted from materials developed by Larry Beck Ball State University.

## Information on the Web About Behavioral Interviews

[www.career.vt.edu/JOBSEARC/interview/Behavioral.htm](http://www.career.vt.edu/JOBSEARC/interview/Behavioral.htm)

[www.careerjournal.com/jobhunting/interviewing/19990420-hirsch.html](http://www.careerjournal.com/jobhunting/interviewing/19990420-hirsch.html)

[www.careerplanning.about.com/library/weekly/aa080900a.htm](http://www.careerplanning.about.com/library/weekly/aa080900a.htm)

[www.rit.placementmanual.com/interviewing/interviewing-14.html](http://www.rit.placementmanual.com/interviewing/interviewing-14.html)

[www.brockport.edu/career/behave.htm](http://www.brockport.edu/career/behave.htm)

[www.careerfair.com/tips/behavioralinter.asp](http://www.careerfair.com/tips/behavioralinter.asp)

[www.bc.edu/offices/careers/skills/interview/types/](http://www.bc.edu/offices/careers/skills/interview/types/)

[www.geocities.com/optimalbiz/interv.html](http://www.geocities.com/optimalbiz/interv.html)

# INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

## What Questions are Employers Likely to Ask During an Interview?

Although you will never know for sure what questions you will be asked in your interviews, you can become aware of the kinds of questions you may be asked. You should be prepared to answer not only the following questions, but variations of them as well. Typically, employers will ask you questions about yourself, your education, your career goals and questions specific to the organization/job you are applying for.

### Questions About Yourself

- Tell me about yourself?
- What are your major strengths?

- If we were to contact one of your references, how would they describe you?
- What are your greatest strengths? Weakness?
- What can you do that someone else can't?
- Why should I hire you?
- What qualifications do you have that make you feel you will be successful in your field?
- What are your three most important priorities?
- Have you ever served in a leadership role? Give me an example.
- Describe an accomplishment in which you take pride.
- What qualities do you like to see in others?
- How do you define success?

The following websites will help you answer the question, "Tell me about yourself."

<http://interview.monster.com/articles/tellme/>

[http://www.salesandmarketingpro.com/articles/tell\\_me\\_about\\_you.html](http://www.salesandmarketingpro.com/articles/tell_me_about_you.html)

[http://www.andreakay.com/interviews/art\\_3002.htm](http://www.andreakay.com/interviews/art_3002.htm)

[http://www.chicagjobresource.com/career\\_interview19.htm](http://www.chicagjobresource.com/career_interview19.htm)

<http://interview.monster.com/archives/dosanddents/>

### **Questions About Your Education/Experience**

- Why did you attend UW-Platteville?
- How has attending UW-Platteville prepared you for a career with \_\_\_\_\_?
- Which classes did you enjoy the most? Least and why?
- Why did you choose your particular college major?
- If you were starting over, would you choose the same major? If no, what would you choose?
- Describe your most rewarding college experience.
- In what college activities did you participate? Why?
- What jobs have you held? What did you like and dislike about the jobs? Why?
- Give me an example of a problem you encountered in school or on a job and how you solved it.

### **Questions About Career Goals**

- Why did you choose the career for which you are preparing?
- Where do you hope to be in five years?
- What do you think determines an individual's success in a work situation?
- What personal characteristics are necessary for success in your chosen field?
- If you could do anything in life, and know you could not fail, what would you do?
- What are your career goals?
- What have you done that shows initiative?

### **Questions Specific to the Job or Organization**

- Why do you want to work for us?
- What position in our company interests you the most?
- What do you know about our company?
- In addition to literature we sent you, what other sources did you use to find out about us?
- Why are you interested in this field?
- What contribution do you believe you can make to us?
- Can you handle the responsibilities of this position?
- How do I know you are the right person for this job?
- What are the essential elements of a job that would make it right for you?

- Are you willing to relocate and/or travel?

### **Information on the Web About Interviewing Questions**

- [www.interviewcoach.com/index.html](http://www.interviewcoach.com/index.html)
- [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com)
- [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)
- [www.job-interview.net](http://www.job-interview.net)

# QUESTIONS ASKED BY INTERVIEWERS

Before you begin interviewing, think about these questions and possible responses and discuss them with one of the counselors at the University Placement Services Office. These questions reflect a significant movement away from the standard directive questions towards more open-ended situational queries. Common themes include applications of analytical, problem solving and decision-making skills, leadership development, creativity, teamwork, and personal development.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Describe your ideal job.
3. What do you know about our company/organization? Why are you interested in our organization?
4. Who or what has had the greatest influence on the development of your career interests?
5. What factors did you consider in choosing your major?
6. Why did you choose to attend your college or university?
7. Do you think you received a good education? In what ways?
8. Which classes in your major did you like best? Least? Why?
9. Which elective classes did you like best? Least? Why?
10. Were you financially responsible for any portion of your college education?
11. What goals have you set for yourself? How are you planning to achieve them?
12. What two or three things are most important to you in a position?
13. What kind of work do you want to do?
14. Define success. Failure.
15. Tell me about a project you initiated.
16. What are your expectations of your future employer?
17. What is your GPA? How do you feel about it? Does it reflect your ability?
18. How do you solve conflicts (preferably work related)?
19. Tell me about how you perceive your strengths. Your weaknesses. How do you evaluate yourself?
20. What work experience has been the most valuable to you and why?
21. What motivates you most in a job?
22. What was the most useful criticism you ever received and who was it from?
23. Give an example of a problem you have solved and the process you used to solve it (work related problem).
24. Describe the project or situation that best demonstrated your analytical skills.
25. What has been your greatest challenge (work/college/personal)?
26. Have you ever spoken before a group of people? How large?
27. Describe a situation where you had a conflict with another individual and how you dealt with it.
28. What were the biggest problems you have encountered in college? How have you handled them? What did you learn from them? Did you have problems with certain classes? Which classes did you like the best/least?
29. What are your team-player qualities (give examples)?
30. Describe your leadership style.
31. What interests or concerns you about the position or the company?
32. In a particular leadership role you had, what was the greatest challenge?
33. What idea have you developed and implemented that was particularly creative or innovative?
34. What characteristics do you think are important for this position?
35. How have your educational and work experiences prepared you for this position?
36. What job-related skills have you developed?
37. Describe for me a typical day on your most recent job.
38. What did you enjoy most about your last employment? Least?
39. Have you ever quit a job? Why?
40. How do you think you have changed personally since you started college?
41. Tell me about a team project of which you are particularly proud of your contribution.
42. How do you motivate people?
43. Why did you choose the extracurricular activities you did? What did you gain? How did you contribute?

44. Where do you want to be in five years? Ten years?
45. Do you plan to return to school for further education?
46. What types of situations put you under pressure and how do you deal with the pressure?
47. Tell me about a difficult decision you have made.
48. Give an example of a situation in which you failed and how you handled it.
49. Tell me about a situation when you had to persuade another person to your point of view.
50. Have you ever done any volunteer work? What kind?
51. What do you do for personal/professional enrichment/improvement?
52. Knowing what you know now about your college experience, would you make the same decisions over?
53. What can you contribute to this company?
54. How would you react to having your credibility questioned?
55. Do you prefer to work under supervision or on your own?
56. What kind of boss do you prefer?
57. What characteristics are most important in a good manager? Have you displayed any of these characteristics?
58. What challenges are you looking for in a position?
59. Would you be successful working with a team?
60. Do you prefer large or small organizations? Why?
61. What other types of positions are you considering?
62. How do you feel about working in a structured environment?
63. Are you willing to relocate or travel as part of your career?
64. What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction?
65. Describe a leadership role of yours and tell why you committed your time to it.
66. How are you conducting your search and how will you make your decision?
67. What is the most important lesson you have learned in or out of school?
68. Describe a situation where you had to work with someone who was difficult. How was the person difficult and how did you handle the situation?
69. Are you able to work on several assignments at once?
70. How do you feel about working overtime?
71. How would your friends describe you? Your professors? Past employers/supervisors?
72. Give me an example of when you went above and beyond what was required of you.
73. Tell me about a situation where you saw a potential problem and what you did to prevent the problem.
74. How did you like your last employer?
75. Tell me about your worst boss -or- your worst experience in college. How did you handle it?
76. What have you done to make a difference on your campus?
77. What is your biggest SUCCESS -or- FAILURE?
78. Tell me about a creative solution you developed in approaching a problem or situation.
79. When did you have a failure in a leadership role?
80. What have you done that goes beyond what society expects of you?
81. What is your best and worst leadership role?
82. Describe for me a situation in which you demonstrated your leadership skills.
83. What type of people do you feel you do not get along with?
84. Describe for me a situation when you were unable to complete a project on time.
85. Describe for me a situation when you had to be tolerant of an opinion that was different from yours.
86. Describe for me a situation when you had to deal with an irate person/customer.
87. Tell me how do you spend your free time?
88. Who in the business world (or your area of interest) has served as a source of inspiration for you?
89. What were the best and worst aspects of your last job (or school)?
90. Tell me about your current and previous employers.
91. What are your salary expectations?
92. Is there anything else I should know about you?
93. We are looking at a lot of great candidates, why are you the best person for us to hire?

# DRESS FOR INTERVIEWING SUCCESS

- First impressions count. Project a professional image. You are trying to sell yourself!
- Your main task is to choose clothing and accessories that will not take the interviewer's attention from you and your qualifications. Stick to the accepted "corporate" standard interview to be safe.
- Make sure the interview clothes you have chosen enable you to feel comfortable, confident and secure!

## GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- Dress for the job you want, not the job you have.
- Absolutely no gum, candy, or cigarettes. Never smoke before an interview, the odor will linger on clothes, hands and breath.
- Good hygiene is essential-shower, use deodorant, brush your teeth, comb you hair and shave.
- Avoid overpowering aftershave, cologne or perfume.
- Nails should be neat and clean.
- Wear a dress watch. Your belt should always match the color of your shoes.
- Clothing, shoes and accessories should be neat, clean and ironed. Clothes should be new or at least in very good condition.
- Arrive early, go to the restroom and check the mirror in the Career Center for your appearance.
- Clothing for internship/co-op interviews can be a bit more relaxed. Wear dress pants with a wool or wool/polyester blend sport coat or dress jacket. Wear solid, high-quality cotton shirts. Preferably white or off white.

## BUILDING A WARDROBE:

- Give yourself enough time to shop for the suit and other interview attire.
- Go to a good clothing store and try on the best suit there that you like. Notice the details of construction, including material, lapels, lining, stitching, pocket placement and vents.
- Once you know what a top-of-the-line suit looks and feels like, go to a store with clothing you can afford. Try to find a suit that has some of the features found on an expensive suit.
- Opt for good-quality, classic clothing to get the best value for your money.
- Shop at a store with a good reputation. Often the Sales Associate will be able to give you good advice on fit and accessories. Have the suit altered by the store if necessary.

## Guidelines for Men

### GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE:

- Conservative, well-fitted, two-piece business suit (navy, gray, black, green, pinstriped or solid, avoid solid black if possible. It is sometimes viewed as too somber and/or severe).
- Suit sleeve length should fall between the wrist and top knuckle on your thumb.
- Long-sleeved, ironed, lightly starched dress shirt of 100% cotton, in white-off white or pale blue. Long sleeves give the impression of authority and professionalism (no stripes or short sleeves).
- Wear a white undershirt underneath your dress shirt. Wear underwear.
- Matching silk tie that extends just below the belt line. If possible find a tie that has a pattern accenting the company color and coordinates with the color of your suit.
- To build a basic corporate wardrobe, buy a good suit in a dark color. Add items as you can afford them. Purchase a blue sports jacket (not a sport coat) and two additional pairs of pants to go with the suit and sport jacket. Buy two good-quality white or off-white cotton shirts and one light-blue shirt. Purchase three silk ties, one with a conservative pattern. Buy black wing tip shoes or other dress shoes with a black belt. If you opt for a dark-brown suit (less formal), buy brown or cordovan shoes with a matching belt.

### ACCESSORIES, HAIR, NAILS:

- Mid-calf dark socks with polished lace-up dress shoes in black or cordovan (no loafers or tassels). If new, wear at least one day to break in. When you are seated the sock should be above pants cuff.
- Carry a leather portfolio, leather-like or a briefcase.
- Keep hair neat and clean. Short hair is expected.
- No facial hair is most conservative. If you have facial hair, trim it neatly.
- Remove visible body piercings, including earrings, and cover tattoos.
- No casual clothing (jeans, t-shirts, sport tube socks).

## *Guidelines for Women*

### GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL ATTIRE:

- Conservative, well-fitted suit (navy, gray, black-dark colors are best). Stylish, professional pantsuits are acceptable with many employers. When in doubt, wear a skirt suit (the hem should be no shorter than 2” above the knee, wear appropriate undergarments).
- Blouse of 100% cotton or silk, carefully ironed, in white, ivory, pale blue, gray, or light pink. Should not be too tight, sheer or revealing. Remember, no plunging scoop necklines.
- Don’t wear anything considered sexy!
- Hair should be trimmed, neatly arranged and clean.
- Avoid or use sparingly colognes or perfumes. Your scent should not linger after you leave.
- To build a basic wardrobe, buy a good suit in navy, black, gray, olive, camel, or wine. Then purchase a white or ivory shell or blouse (silk, polyester, rayon, cotton, acrylic/cotton blend), black pants, knit top, print blouse, and fine gauge sweater top. All items should go well together. Add pieces to match your basics, and you will have many professional alternatives.

### ACCESSORIES: HAIR, MAKE-UP, NAILS:

- Neutral, non-patterned pantyhose in skin tone. Bring an extra pair in case of runs.
- Polished, closed toe, low-heeled (2.5” or less) pumps or flats in black, navy, brown, or burgundy.
- Carry either a purse or a briefcase, not both.
- No dangling earrings, no more than two earrings per ear and no more than one ring per hand. Remove visible piercing and cover tattoos.
- No deep necklines, no frilly dresses, no casual clothing (jeans, t-shirts).
- Keep hair neat and clean, without obvious dark roots. If hair is long, pull it back or keep away from forehead and eyes.
- Make-up should be minimal and look natural.
- Nails should be neat and clean. Use natural, or a complementing color, if desired.

## *Business Casual Guidelines*

If involved in other interviewing activity-relaxed dress may be acceptable. Business casual is defined by a geographic region, industry, and individual employers. The best way to determine a employer standard is to conduct research or ask a company’s representative. As always, when in doubt, dress conservatively, in formal interview attire

### Men

- Not expected to wear ties
- Cotton dockers
- Business or sports jacket is appropriate
- Good sweater
- Stylish, solid or striped dark shirt
- Dark socks
- Matching belt and shoes
- Dress jacket or sport coat
- Flat or low heels
- Neutral hosiery
- Understated belt, scarf, and accessories

### Women

- Business skirt or pants
- Conservative blouse or sweater

# INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

Informational interviews are one of the best sources to gather information on a specific career. The purpose of an informational interview is to obtain information, not to get a job. These interviews are conducted in person, by telephone or e-mail.

## Why do an informational interview?

1. Learn firsthand what it is like to perform a particular type of work in a particular organization.
2. Gather information about what types of job opportunities/career paths exist in a given field of interest.
3. Develop contacts (networking) with key people who either do the hiring or who act as resources for those who do hire.
4. Gain self-confidence and learn about “problem areas” where you can provide solutions with your skills and abilities.

## Procedure

- **First** - Identify the occupation or industry you wish to learn about.
  - Assess interests, abilities, values and skills. The Advising and Career Exploration Services (ACES), 133 Warner hall, 342-1033 or University Counseling Office, 220 Royce Hall, 342-1865 can aid in personal assessments.
- **Second** - Prepare for the interview by researching the career and then prepare a list of questions that you would like to have answered.
  - Visit: [http://www.stetson.edu/~khansen/bn301/200\\_info\\_int\\_Qs.html](http://www.stetson.edu/~khansen/bn301/200_info_int_Qs.html) for a list of “200 Informational Interview Questions.”
  - Choose ten questions applicable to the person you are interviewing.
  - Know exactly what kind of information you want, do not ask questions that are routine and readily available.
  - Aim for a 20-30 minute interview.
- **Third** - Identify whom to talk to, start with a list of people you already know, such as; friends, relatives, fellow students, present or former co-workers, supervisors, faculty, college advisors, neighbors or anyone who might know someone in the career you are interested in.
  - Ask the mutual acquaintance if you can use their name when contacting the interviewee.
- **Fourth** - Contact the person to set up the interview:
  - by telephone
  - by a letter followed by a telephone call
  - by e-mail.
- Try for an in-person interview, a professional image, warm smile and firm handshake placing your face to your name. Have your questions ready when calling, as your only option may be the telephone informational interview right then and there.

# YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS A JOB SEEKER

## Here's What You Can Reasonably Expect From Your Career Center...

### **1. Confidentiality.**

Career staffs are expected to exercise sound judgment and fairness in maintaining the confidentiality of student information, regardless of the source, including written records, reports, and computer data bases. Disclosure of student information outside the college/university should only be made with your prior consent unless health and safety considerations necessitate the distribution of such information.

### **2. Freedom of choice.**

You're entitled to be assisted by the career staff in developing a career plan and making career decisions without having staff members' biases or personal values imposed upon you.

### **3. Access to all services and events.**

Career centers may charge students for registering or taking part in certain services or events. Such fees should be sufficiently nominal so as not to hinder you from participating.

### **4. Access to career information.**

All students, regardless of personal or educational background, should be provided by career staffs with equal and full access to information on career opportunities and types of employing organizations. Career staffs are also expected to inform you how and where to obtain information which may influence your decisions about an employing organization.

### **5. Testing information.**

Career staffs should inform you of the availability of testing, the purpose of the tests, and the disclosure policies regarding test results.

## ...And From Employers

### **1. Confidentiality.**

Employers are expected to maintain the confidentiality of student information, regardless of the source, including personal knowledge, written records/reports, and computer data bases. An employer shouldn't disclose information about you to another organization without your prior written consent, unless necessitated by health and/or safety considerations.

### **2. Accurate information.**

Employers are expected to provide accurate information about their organizations and employment opportunities. This includes, but is not limited to, positions available, responsibilities, career advancement opportunities, and benefits.

### **3. Freedom from undue pressure.**

Employers are expected to provide you with a reasonable amount of time to make a decision about accepting an employment offer.

They are also expected to provide you with a reasonable process for making your decision. An unreasonable process, for example, is one in which the student is told that the offer is good for a set amount of time; unbeknownst to the student, the same offer has been made to others—and the student who accepts first gets the job.

In addition, it is improper for employers to pressure you to revoke your acceptance of another job offer.

#### **4. Timely communication.**

Employers are expected to inform you of your status in the hiring process and communicate hiring decisions within the agreed-upon time frame.

#### **5. Fair treatment.**

If an employer is required by changing conditions to revoke a job offer that you've accepted, you're entitled to a fair and equitable course of action. That can include, but is not limited to, financial assistance and outplacement service.

#### **6. Testing information.**

Employers should inform you in advance of any testing, the purpose of the tests, and their policies regarding disclosure of test results.

#### **7. Nondiscrimination.**

Employers are expected to avoid discrimination in their recruitment activities and to follow equal employment opportunity and affirmative action principles.

### **What's Your Part in This?**

#### **1. Provide accurate information about your academic work and records, including courses taken, grades, positions held, and duties performed.**

You can, however, refuse to provide an employer with specific information about any job offers you may have received from other employers. You do not have to name the organizations that have made you offers, nor do you have to provide specific information about what salaries you've discussed with those organizations. Instead, you can give broad responses to such questions, naming types of employers—*"I've interviewed with employers in the retail industry"*—and offering salary ranges rather than specific dollar amounts—*"The salary offers I've received have been in the \$25,000 to \$30,000 range."* Incidentally, it's in your best interest to research salaries and to let employers know that you have done so.

#### **2. Interview genuinely.**

That means interviewing only with employers you are sincerely interested in working for and whose eligibility requirements you meet. "Practice" interviewing is misleading to employers—wasting both their time and money—and prevents sincerely interested candidates from using those interview slots.

#### **3. Adhere to schedules.**

Appear for all interviews, on campus and elsewhere, unless unforeseeable events prevent you from doing so. And, if you can't make the interview because of an unforeseeable event, notify your career center or the employer at the earliest possible moment.

#### **4. Don't keep employers hanging.**

Communicate your acceptance or refusal of a job offer to employers as promptly as possible, so they can notify other candidates that they are still being considered or that the position is filled.

#### **5. Accept a job offer in good faith.**

When you accept an offer, you should have every intention of honoring that commitment. Accepting an offer only as a precautionary measure is misleading to the employer and may restrict opportunities for others who are genuinely interested in that employer.

#### **6. Withdraw from recruiting when your job search is completed.**

If you accept an offer or decide that full-time graduate or professional studies are for you, notify your career center and withdraw from the on-campus recruiting process immediately. And, let employers that are actively considering you for a job know that you are now out of the running.

By informing everyone that you've got a job or are headed to graduate school, you not only get the chance to brag but also to help your friends who are trying to get on interview schedules or who are being considered for positions.

**7. Claim fair reimbursement.**

If an employer has agreed to reimburse you for expenses you incur in its recruitment process, your request should be only for reasonable and legitimate expenses.

**8. Obtain the career information you need to make an informed choice about your future.**

It's up to you to acquire the information about career opportunities, organizations, and any other information that might influence your decisions about an employing organization.